

Crime Reports for Montgomery County, Maryland show that:

- **Every** woman who was murdered in the County in 2006 was killed by someone she knew.
- **79%** of all reported rape victims in 2006 were related to or otherwise knew their attackers.
- **35%** of all reported rape victims in 2006 were under the age of 18.

For additional resources, contact:

Local Resources:

Montgomery County Abused Persons Program
(240)777-4195
(240)777-4673 (24 hours)

Montgomery County Victim Assistance and Sexual Assault Program (VASAP)
(240)777-1355
(240)777-HELP (24 hours)
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/vasap>

Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence
(301)352-4574
1-800-MD-HELPS (63-43577)
<http://www.mnadv.org>

Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
1-800-983-RAPE (toll free)
<http://www.mcasa.org>

Sexual Assault Legal Institute
(301)565-2277
1-877-496-SALI (toll free)

Montgomery County Commission for Women Counseling and Career Center
401 N. Washington Street, Suite 100
Rockville, MD 20850
(240)777-8300
(301)279-1034 (TTY)
cfw@montgomerycountymd.gov
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw

National Resources:

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
1-800-787-3224 (TTY)

National Sexual Assault Hotline
1-800-656-HOPE (free and confidential)

National Sexual Assault Online Hotline
<http://online.rainn.org/index.aspx>

Men Can Stop Rape
<http://www.mencanstoprape.org/>
(202)265-6530

National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline
<http://www.loveisrespect.org/>
1-866-331-9474

Curriculums on Dating Violence Available at:

<http://www.hazeldon.org/safedates>

<http://www.breakthecycle.org/>

<http://www.kbep.org/>

This brochure is produced by the Montgomery County Commission for Women (CFW).

An agency of Montgomery County Government, the Commission for Women is a 15-member advisory board advocating women's rights and concerns. The CFW Counseling and Career Center provides individual, couples and career counseling, workshops and support groups.

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Let's Talk About Violence in Relationships

What you don't know **can** hurt you.



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Abusive Relationships:

Be aware. *If there are any signs of danger, don't enter into a relationship.*

Recognize *the signs of potential violence in others.*

Getting out *of an abusive relationship is often difficult and can be very dangerous.*

Avoid dating people who:

- Try to control or restrict your behavior and activities;
- Have angry outbursts;
- Criticize or demean you, or those you care about;
- Intimidate or threaten you;
- Physically restrain or hurt you;
- Take foolish risks to show off;
- Enjoy hurting animals;
- Abuse drugs or alcohol;
- Pressure you to drink or take drugs;
- Isolate you from other relationships;
- Pressure you for sex or dates;
- Make all the decisions for you;
- Blame you for their abusive behavior;
- Are overly jealous of your relationships with others.

More women and girls are assaulted, raped and murdered not by strangers, but by people:

- They know and trust;
- With whom they share a home; or
- They invite into their homes.

A NOTE FOR PARENTS

“Beware of Strangers.”

Good advice but not good enough...

The symptoms below can be signs of many problems, but they may also be indicators of an abusive relationship.

Signs Your Child May Be in an Abusive Relationship:

- Heightened anxiety (fear of “setting off” his/her partner)
- Depression or thoughts of suicide
- Unexplained bruises, broken bones, cuts, heavy make-up to cover up injuries
- Excessive guilt, shame, indecisiveness
- Feeling inadequate or low self-esteem
- Truancy or falling grades
- Withdrawal or passivity
- Heightened aggressiveness

Talk to your children:

- We can all play an important role in stopping domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Domestic violence and sexual assault are men’s issues too. Speak out when someone tells an offensive joke, blames sexual or domestic violence victims, or implies that sexual assault, rape or domestic violence

is acceptable. Men can help prevent violence in relationships by:

- Never using offensive language to describe women;
- Challenging violence-supporting attitudes, and behaviors in others;
- Raising awareness of the damaging impact of violence in relationships;
- Modeling appropriate behavior toward partners.

Tell your children:

- **Violence is never the answer.** Violence is never acceptable in a relationship.
- **It is NEVER your fault if you are attacked.** Violent behavior is ALWAYS the responsibility of the offender.
- **There is no doubt.** Without a partner’s consent, it **IS** rape, it **IS** assault.
- **Your safety is more important than whether you have broken any family rules.** No matter what the situation, you can call for a ride home anytime – no questions asked.

In EVERY relationship, you have the right to say “No,” to ask for what you need, to make your own decisions, to trust yourself, to be understood and cared about, to be treated well.

How to reduce the risk of assault in social situations:

- When you go to a party, go with a group of friends. Arrive together, check in with each other and leave together.
- Practice safe drinking. Try not to leave any beverages unattended or accept drinks from someone you don't know or trust.
- Don't trust people you don't know well.
- Have a buddy system. Don't be afraid to let a friend know if something is making you uncomfortable or if you are worried about your or your friend's safety.
- If someone you don't know or trust asks you to go somewhere alone, say that you would rather stay with the group.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Knowing where you are and who is around you may help you to find a way out of a bad situation.
- Don't drink so much that you can't make good decisions.

*Remember: acquaintance rapists often encourage their victims to “get drunk” to make the attack easier.

Acquaintance Rape:

The **acquaintance rapist** may be someone you just met or may even be a friend, but it is always someone who has sex with you without your consent. This form of assault can be a particular problem on college campuses, in high schools, and at gathering places such as bars and parties.

Most acquaintance rapes go unreported – undetected by authorities. The victim may feel embarrassed or intimidated because she was in his company willingly, so she doesn't seek help.

Undetected rapists commit acquaintance rapes but are never reported or prosecuted. They often go on to assault others.

Undetected Rapists:

- Use alcohol or drugs to make their victims more vulnerable to attack;
- Target victims – often unsuspecting young people looking for friendship, or just trying to “fit in;”
- Plan their assault;
- Take the victim away from friends or the crowd;
- Use only a limited amount of violence, just enough to subdue or frighten their victim into submission;
- Use psychological weapons – power, control, manipulation and threats – backed up by physical force;
- Almost never resort to weapons such as knives or guns.

Remember, it's **never** your fault if you are assaulted.

